

REALIZING POTENTIAL

CHANGING FUTURES

Juvenile Justice Commission

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Howard L. Beyer, Executive Director

During the month of May, the State of New Jersey and the Juvenile Justice Commission make a special effort to recognize the dedication of its custody staff. The week of May 4 – 10, 2003, is proclaimed as "Correctional Officers Appreciation Week" throughout the State. It is the JJC's men and women in blue who are at the front-lines on a daily basis. While the JJC appreciates the efforts of our custody staff every day, during the month of May these highly trained and dedicated individuals are recognized for their important work.

The JJC is proud to have two exceptional leaders in Chiefs Craig Farr (JMSF) and Edward Reifer

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(NJTS). They have a huge responsibility, they take it seriously and they live up to it.

Below is the text of a proclamation issued by Governor McGreevey. I am pleased to let you know that the Governor and the Attorney General have strongly supported the JJC over the past year-and-a-half. Even during tough budget times, their staffs have worked with the JJC to identify necessary budget cuts without jeopardizing the services that it provides. This could not have been possible without their assistance.



Governor James E. McGreevey

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank our Director of Operations, Brigitte Mitchell-Morton, for her leadership and her willingness to examine issues while identifying innovative solutions. The JJC has undergone many changes in the Office of Operations in the past year - many of which are highlighted below. These changes would not have been possible without the leadership of Ms. Mitchell-Morton, her dedicated and seasoned staff, and the contributions and cooperation of the various bargaining units.



Brigitte Mitchell-Morton
Director of Operations

TEXT OF RESOLUTION BY GOVERNOR

Whereas, one of the responsibilities of the State of New Jersey is to provide its citizens with an effective judicial system, concentrating on quality and safety for all citizens; and

Whereas, New Jersey's dedicated correctional officers are essential to the success of our judicial system; and

Whereas, the State of New Jersey recognizes the significant work and unique contributions of correctional officers and all other staff employed in adult and juvenile corrections institutions and agencies; and

Whereas, correctional officers risk their own well-being, continually demonstrating true commitment to ensuring our public safety; and

Whereas, as public servants, correctional officers dutifully perform their work with courage, pride and true professionalism; and

Whereas, the State of New Jersey is pleased to join with officials and distinguished correctional officers in recognizing the achievement of these dedicated individuals;

Now, therefore, I, James E. McGreevey, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim May 4 to May 10, 2003 as Correctional Officers Appreciation Week in New Jersey. Given, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this 14th day of April in the year of Our Lord two thousand three and of the Independence of the United States, the two hundred and twenty-seventh. James E. McGreevey, Governor.

NEW BADGE, LOGO AND MOTTO

There have been many recent changes at the JJC. Previous editions of this newsletter have highlighted the new mission statement and the new ID badges.



Another recent change is the JJC's new Custody Badge and logo. At the request of the representatives from the JJC's bargaining units, Executive Director Beyer authorized the commencement of a Uniform Committee to explore changes in the uniforms and patch design to improve morale. Its responsibility expanded to



include the JJC's logo and assistance with the new ID cards. The uniform committee developed a number of potential designs. Members of the executive board from PBA local 367 primarily created the final selection.

Beginning May 15, the JJC's motto will also change. The new motto, 'Realizing Potential & Changing Futures' more accurately depicts the JJC's responsibilities and goals.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND MODIFICATION PROGRAM

For several months, a committee of JJC staff members worked to create a new behavior management and modification program for both the JJC's secure facilities and community programs. The committee crafting the new program was a diverse one. It consisted of civilian and custody staff, education and social services staff, and supervisory line-staff.

This program is designed to replace the disciplinary procedures set forth in the New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 10:A, which will no longer apply to the Juvenile Justice Commission. The JJC will promulgate rules that replace the adult procedures.

Two key components of the new Behavior Management and Modification Program are graduated interventions, and incentives and disincentives. Graduated interventions allow for discipline that is appropriate to a resident's behavior. Incentives and disincentives align actions more closely with the classification levels of residents.

Another important change is the replacement of a Department of Corrections Hearing Officer in secure care facilities with a new facility treatment team. This team consists of the facility administrator, the Director of Custody Operations and a department head from Education and Social Services. The treatment team reviews major rule violations and make recommendations, including

changes to individual treatment plans, transfer recommendations to the Institutional Classification Committee, or isolation. Should isolation be necessary, the new program limits its use to no more than fifteen days.

Training in the procedures of the Behavior Management and Modification Program is underway. When the program is fully implemented, it will help JJC staff interact better with residents, and it will provide residents with more positive choices. It will also increase staff's ability to respond to negative behavior with specific and appropriate sanctions.

LIFE SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

In January 1996, the New Jersey Legislature enacted legislation that created the Stabilization and Reintegration Program (SRP), commonly referred to as the JJC's juvenile boot camp. This program has always been very different than the traditional boot camps that have gained widespread publicity. Under the leadership of Superintendent Kathy Tumolo and with the assistance of many staff members, a comprehensive plan is being developed to add new components to the program. The JJC is also pursuing a name change that reflects the program's true philosophy and emphasis on education while still maintaining a structured and disciplined environment.

The proposed Life Skills and Leadership Academy will guide cadets through their every day lives and their pursuit of excellence in every aspect of the program. The cornerstones of the Academy will be academic excellence, character development, personal motivation, leadership, and physical development. The Academy will also emphasize vocational training and career development focusing in areas such as: health science; information technology; manufacturing; architecture and construction; marketing, sales and service; hospitality and tourism; and business, management and administration. The



new curriculum will offer a broader, more durable preparation for the world of employment.

NJTS COMMUNITY SERVICE DETAIL

The JJC operates programs located in various communities throughout the state and believes that each of these programs should be active members of their individual neighborhoods rather than isolated entities. Many of you are familiar with various community projects performed by the JJC's Residential Community Homes, including community clean-ups, building restoration and grounds keeping. Not only are the communities appreciative of the services that the JJC provides, but they enjoy the lasting and beneficial relationships that are formed.

As part of the JJC's efforts to expand the 'Good Neighbor Initiative', Executive Director Howard Beyer, JJC Executive Staff and the New Jersey Training School (NJTS) Administration met with the mayors of the communities surrounding NJTS in Monroe Township last year. They discussed the possibility of NJTS residents performing community service projects in Monroe Township, Jamesburg, Helmetta and Spotswood.

The mayors of the communities expressed their support of the program and their eagerness for the project to come to fruition. We are pleased that NJTS Community Service Detail is nearing reality. JJC residents are currently being evaluated to participate in the first series of community service projects.

We are looking forward to the implementation of the NJTS Community Service Detail this summer and to becoming productive participants in the surrounding communities.

VISIT BY SECRETARY OF STATE

On March 10, Secretary of State Regena L. Thomas visited the Female Secure Care and Intake Facility to celebrate Women's History Month. The program, organized by

Superintendents Linda Thomas (Hayes), Francine Williams (DOVES) and Tamiko Smith (Valentine RCH), provided a wonderful opportunity for our residents to not only hear from a dynamic speaker, but to meet a community role model.



Regena L. Thomas
Secretary of State

The Secretary of State gave a rousing speech depicting the crossroads she faced throughout her life. The residents presented her with hand-made gifts including a JJC pillow, a crocheted doll, and an afghan. The afghan is embroidered with the following words: "Love ourselves and each other, Grow in beauty and wisdom, Join hands and open hearts, Feel strong and stand tall."

Not only did the residents of the Hayes Unit, DOVES and Valentine RCH enjoy the visit by the Secretary of State, she thoroughly enjoyed herself, staying to eat cookies, chat and even give out hugs to the residents.

Once again, the JJC's civilian and custody staff ensured that everything ran smoothly for our special guest.

GANG INITIATIVES

Several years ago, then-Deputy Executive Director Beyer established a gang intervention

team at the JJC. Many of the initial ideas came from Executive Director Beyer's experiences with the State Department of Corrections where he was instrumental in forming their Security Threat Group Program.

The JJC views gang involvement as an addiction and developed a multidisciplinary team to deal with the issues surrounding gang involvement and exposure. During the last few months, the JJC embarked on an extensive gang training and prevention/intervention program that is specifically designed for juveniles. This program is also being shared with our community partners.

The first part of this initiative involves continual staff training focusing on basic gang awareness. The last three JJC Training Academy Classes participated in an eight-hour intensive gang identifier course, which provides recruits with additional tools to handle situations that arise among JJC residents. Efforts are under way to train all JJC law enforcement officers within the JJC.

The JJC also implemented a cutting-edge program designed for youth involved with gangs or at high-risk of involvement. The program, called Phoenix, is an all-encompassing curriculum that targets juveniles before they reach the doors of the JJC, juveniles in the JJC's care and those who have returned home. The JJC's Office of Education, with the expertise of Dominic Cicala and Allen Mitchell, tailored this curriculum to specifically address the needs of JJC youth both in secure care and community placement. The JJC is also working with county youth detention centers to adapt this program for their use.

Another important aspect of the JJC's gang initiative is community outreach. Lt. Edwin Torres of NJTS routinely reaches out to communities offering his expertise on gang related issues and gang prevention. He makes presentations to parents, educators, faith-based and community groups, law enforcement, and the youth of our state. Due to the high demand for these services,

the JJC plans to participate in several regional conferences across the state to train communities leaders and educators as follow up to the JJC's extremely successful Youth Gang Symposium held last year in Trenton.



While the JJC doesn't believe it has all the answers, it is using all its resources to prevent gang activities within the Commission and in our communities. The JJC is actively taking part in several statewide initiatives with the Office of the Attorney General, New Jersey State Police and the US Immigration and Naturalization Service.

CAMPUS PATROL

Beginning this summer, a bike patrol will be established at the New Jersey Training School (NJTS). Training for the "Campus Patrol" begins this month, and the program will be operational by June. It is designed to correspond with the JJC's efforts to create a campus-like setting at NJTS. The Campus Patrol will also give the custody staff a different perspective of the campus as they ensure security and allow for a speedy response to any issues that arise on the grounds. After preliminary discussions with the law enforcement staff at NJTS, more than thirty officers have already volunteered for this new program.

COACH PROGRAM

The JJC is continuously looking for new ways to help our law enforcement officers do their jobs better. Over the years, our training programs were overhauled to ensure that the best and most recent tools are available to our staff. Now, the JJC is formulating a new Coach Program that will match a correction officer recruit with an experienced officer after his or her completion of the training academy.



While recruits learn about JJC policies and procedures at the academy, this program allows our recruits to see them in practice and gain valuable practical experience from the JJC's existing custody staff. While still in the development stages, this program will serve to give JJC recruits hands-on experience while forging lasting relationships among our law enforcement officers.

FIRST FEMALE CAPTAIN

The JJC is pleased to announce that Linda M. Ransom has been promoted to the position of Captain, becoming the first female Captain on the JJC's custody staff. Captain Linda Ransom joined the JJC as a Lieutenant in 1997 after nearly fourteen years in the Department of Corrections. She began her career as a Correction Officer Recruit in 1983 at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women and received a promotion to Sergeant at the Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility in 1991.

Captain Ransom was promoted to Lieutenant in the newly formed Juvenile Justice Commission in April of 1997 at Juvenile Medium Security Facility (JMSF), where she worked with both male and female residents. Her career path has allowed her to work with the full range of ages and genders in the correctional spectrum: men, women, and male and female juveniles. Her recent promotion to Captain at the Training School became effective in January, 2003.



Captain Linda M. Ransom

Captain Ransom attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and York University in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. In her spare time, the Captain enjoys gardening, music and gourmet cooking. She also has two Welsh ponies, two dogs and two cats.

The JJC considers itself fortunate to have staff members of the caliber of Captain Ransom and trusts that she will serve as a role model and mentor to other staff members.

RECOGNITION

Senior Correction Officer Leslie Robertson has been selected by Corrections USA to receive their Gold Medal of Valor Award. S.C.O. Robertson will be honored at the CUSA Valor Awards Luncheon in Washington for his actions in assisting a fellow Correction Officer involved in an altercation with a juvenile resident.

The JJC is pleased to join Corrections USA in honoring Senior Correction Officer Robertson.

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Local Programs and Services